

## House Republican Press Release

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### Rep. Harkins Introduces Legislation To Prohibit Invasive Plant



#### *Weed Choked Off Stratford Pond*

State Rep. John Harkins, R-Stratford, has introduced legislation to add the Brazilian Elodea to the list of invasive plants prohibited by the state. This plant was responsible for the recent deterioration of Brewster Pond in Stratford's Longbrook Park before the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) began to address the problem. Rep. Harkins also submitted testimony in favor of the legislation (House Bill 6254) when it was presented to the Legislature's Environment Committee.

During the past year, The DEP and town of Stratford we have spent approximately \$2,000 in efforts to extirpate Brazilian Elodea growth at the pond. State and local officials anticipate spending a similar amount this year, said Rep. Harkins.

"This legislation would ban the sale, importation, buying, cultivation, or distribution of Brazilian Elodea in the State of Connecticut," said Rep. Harkins, who serves as an Assistant Minority Leader. "This plant is apparently banned under a technical classification. We are trying to ensure it does not enter the state under its more common name."

"Brazilian Elodea is a non-native fresh water plant that after taking root, can have devastating effects in a body of water," added Rep. Harkins. "Longbrook Park, identified as a showcase park in Stratford, is located in a residential neighborhood. The effects this plant had on the pond in this park were of great concern. The pond became grossly discolored and an eyesore to visitors and the neighborhood surrounding the pond. Banning this plant in our state would help prevent any similar incidents in the future."

"Local officials also support the passage of this bill," concluded Rep. Harkins. "The town and its elected officials have worked hard to eradicate this plant from the pond. I applaud their efforts and continued concern regarding the upkeep and maintenance of Brewster Pond in Longbrook Park."